Chapter VI

THE HOLISTIC VIEWS OF THE ORGANICISTS

WE OWE, I believe, the word ' holism' and its convenient adjectival form 'holistic[3] to General Smuts. The words seem to be useful equivalents of the German expressions *Ganzheitbexogenheitslehre* and *Gansheitbezogen,* which will hardly bear literal translation. I use the word ' holistic [s] in a sense rather narrower in connotation, and therefore wider in denotation, than Smuts gave to it in his volume *Holism*; as a label, namely, under which to group all theories of living things which insist upon the wholeness, the unity, and individuality of each organism, as an aspect which must be taken into account by every attempt to explain the vital processes. I reserve the noun [c] Holism ' as the name for a group of closely allied views which not only insist on the wholeness of the organism but also recognize the fundamentally teleological nature of all organic activities.

Organicism

There is now a large number of biologists who give adhesion to what is called * organicism' or the organicist or organismal or organismic doctrine. The distinctive marks of organicism are two : first, it is holistic, insists upon the necessity of recognizing the wholeness of each organism in every attempt to explain its processes; secondly, while seeming to insist that

mechanistic
explanations are impossible, it repudiates all
teleological